

# AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SYRIAC VERSION OF ISAIAH: III <sup>1</sup>

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Part I included a brief history of the study of the Syriac version; an outline of the procedures followed in our investigation; a list of abbreviations and symbols used; and a list of MSS used, with their sigla and brief descriptions.

Part II presented the evaluations of 101 variants selected from the 3049 variants found in our manuscript study and the 290 found in our patristic study, together with several summary tables.

Part III presents a few comparisons and conclusions concerning our study of the MSS and of NT quotations from Is, and, finally, a summary and our conclusions concerning the whole investigation.

## *Diettrich's F o y Group*

Diettrich found that his later West Syrian MSS o y (R<sup>5</sup> P<sup>3</sup>) of the 17th cent., written in Italy, had strong affinities with his F (F<sup>1</sup>) of the 9th cent.<sup>2</sup> The present investigation has added R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup>, also of the 17th cent., to this cluster. The group of five together, with no other MSS, supports 101 variants, or 3.3% of the 3049. The Hebrew text agrees with 21 (20.8%), the Targum, with 14 (13.9%), the Greek, with 19 (18.8%), and the Syrohexapla likewise with 19. All four together support 8 (7.9%); Hebrew and Targum together, 5, and Greek and Syrohexapla together, 9 (8.9%). The Syrohexapla margin agrees with 1, as do the Targum

<sup>1</sup> Part I was published in *AUSS*, III (1965), 138-157; Part II in *AUSS*, IV (1966), 37-64.

<sup>2</sup> Gustav Diettrich, *Ein Apparatus criticus zur Pešitto zum Propheten Jesaia* ("Beihefte zur ZAW," vol. VIII; Giessen, 1905), pp. xxiv, xxv.

alone, the Greek alone, and the Syrohexapla alone. The Hebrew solely supports 6 (5.9%). Ten of the 101 have the agreement of Ephraim (9.9%), while 1 is supported by Aphrahat and 1 by other patristic sources, as well as 1 by the NT.

Considering this small group when it is joined by a few at a time of the other MSS, 66 more variants are added, or 2.2% of 3049, a total of 167, or 5.5% of the 3049 due to this group plus a few more. L<sup>4</sup> supports 23, L<sup>5</sup> 27, M<sup>1</sup> 35, and P<sup>6</sup> 16, or a total of 101 instances of support from the older MSS (59.1% of the total of 171 instances of additional support). The group of later MSS and the funerary fragment add 28 (16.4% of the 171), the Lectionaries add 36 (21.1% of the 171), and the Massora correction MSS add 6 (3.5% of the 171 instances of support of this group). It is seen that the oldest MSS are most often the ones supporting the readings of this group. Aphrahat agrees with 3 of the 66 variants added by enlarging the group; Ephraim, with 8, and other patristic writers, with 2. Totaling the data for this coherent group including the additional supporting MSS, there are 167 readings so supported, or 5.5% of the 3049. Ephraim's 18 are 10.8% of the 167; Aphrahat's 4 are 2.4%; the other writers' 3 are 1.8%; and the 1 of the NT is .6%.

#### *Diettrich's B*

Goshen-Gottstein's studies in the Psalms led him to make the following comments on Diettrich's MS B (C<sup>1</sup>), the "Buchanan Bible":

There is, however, one later manuscript which deserves special attention: the famous Buchanan Bible (=B). In the Psalms we count 16 additional variants—nine of which seem *prima facie* to be of value. On closer inspection, however, it turns out—and this is a most important result—that most of these unique readings crept in either from parallel verses or else from the Syrohexapla.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, "Prolegomena to a Critical Edition of the Peshitta," in *Text and Language in Bible and Qumran* (Jerusalem, 1960), p. 171.

It is not very likely that any variant contained in B only, will prove "original" as against the readings of the earlier manuscripts, since the variations in B seem to be a mixture of woolgathering on the part of the scribe and extra-Peshitta influences.<sup>4</sup>

The findings of the present investigator agree with Goshen-Gottstein's evaluation of B (C<sup>1</sup>) as of negligible value, for the text of Is. Only 1 of its readings appears in the group evaluated in Part II, and it is not singular, but would have been included anyway (60: 5<sup>b</sup>, supported by Ephraim and in the second hand of L<sup>3</sup>, perhaps an Old Syriac form). Of its 35 singular readings, 5 could have come from the Syrohexapla; 17 are of the categories included in the evaluations in Part II but were not important enough to be listed; the other 18 are not of the categories included there.

*Diettrich's u*

In his remarks on the wretchedly written MS u (O<sup>2</sup>), Diettrich says that the worth of the branch of text tradition it represents is very small and that "Codex u ist der denkbar schlechteste Repräsentant seines Traditionszweiges. . . ." <sup>5</sup> He mentions in passing that many errors of u are confirmed by v (R<sup>4</sup>), which shows that many errors are due, not to the scribe of u, but to the tradition it represents. (This statement is also true of others of the later MSS.) But Diettrich took the trouble, he says, to compare u with the Hebrew, the Targum, and the Greek, hoping thus to find at least the possibility of an original Peshitta reading. The result was that u goes 4 times with Hebrew, 6 times with Targum, and 30 times with Greek. Seven times it is supported by Hebrew and Targum, 5 times by Hebrew and Greek, twice by Targum and Greek, and 9 times by Hebrew, Greek, and Targum. But Diettrich points out that in the cases in which it goes with these texts and various combinations of them, it is "höchst wahrscheinlich von der syrohexaplarischen oder einer anderen Septuaginta-Version kontaminiert," and thus there remain only "17 Fälle, in denen die Möglichkeit, aber

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172.

<sup>5</sup> Diettrich, *op. cit.*, p. xxii.

auch nur die Möglichkeit, zugegeben werden muss, dass wir es hier mit einer ursprünglichen Pešittolesart zu tun haben könnten. Autant de bruit pour une omelette!"<sup>6</sup>

The present investigator came to a general conclusion very similar to that of Diettrich regarding this MS, u.

Where in the above-quoted statement Diettrich had the words "Septuaginta-Version," he added a footnote quoting the following two sentences from Barnes:

The Syriac transcribers . . . were . . . [ignorant of Hebrew] and ready to introduce readings found in a Greek version or recommended by a Greek Father. So the Peshitta in its later text has more of the LXX than in its earlier form.<sup>7</sup>

This idea is not entirely borne out, however, in the percentages resulting from the present study, as will be seen in the next section.

#### *General Comparisons*

The Hebrew agreement is very high in J<sup>1</sup> (51.3%) and low in O<sup>2</sup> (the wretched u manuscript referred to above), with 14.8%; it is about as low in most of the Massora correction MSS and the Lectionaries from Mt. Sinai, but rather high in the earliest MSS, especially P<sup>6</sup>, L<sup>5</sup> (=D), and M<sup>1</sup> (=A), with 42.9, 41.8, and 39.7%, respectively; but B (=S) has 39.6%, and L<sup>4</sup> has 36.9%, while F<sup>1</sup> (=F) is the lowest of the older group in this investigation, with 33.4%. (Diettrich counted many variants that have been excluded from the present study as being merely orthographic differences and obvious scribal errors.)

Looking at the agreement with the Targum, the situation is almost the same; the above paragraph could be used to describe this comparison, substituting figures that remain in the same ranges and about the same relative positions. Again the earliest MSS show higher percentages than do many of the later MSS. J<sup>1</sup> is again at the top of the list, and O<sup>2</sup> at the bottom.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xxii, xxiv.

<sup>7</sup> W. E. Barnes, "On the Influence of the Septuagint on the Pešitta," *JThS*, II (1901), 197.

When one checks the percentages of agreement with the Greek and the Syrohexapla, they are seen to be about the same too. The most noticeable difference is that the percentages for the Syrohexapla agreements are, in the Massora MSS and the Mt. Sinai Lectionaries, the highest of the four texts' percentages, and the Greek also shows an increase. For the older MSS, the percentages for the Greek and the Syrohexapla are about alike and somewhat lower than those for the Hebrew and the Targum. For the later MSS, the percentages for the Greek and the Syrohexapla are close together and, again, somewhat lower than those for Hebrew and Targum, throughout the period.

Looking at the percentages for Hebrew-Targum joint support, and for Greek-Syrohexapla joint support, there is confirmation of the above conclusions, that the Massora and Lectionary MSS have more of the Greek-Syrohexapla agreement (sometimes much more), and the older ones (except B) have more of the Hebrew-Targum agreement; while the later group is mixed, and a number of the very latest show slightly more Hebrew-Targum agreement. In other words, the variants are already in the earliest MSS extant, to a very great extent; the influences of the four texts are already at work at the earliest recoverable stage. The labor spent on the later MSS is virtually entirely wasted.

#### *Detailed Comparisons*

It is helpful to check the various groups of MSS in detail to see which MS in each group has the highest and which has the lowest percentage of support from each of the four texts. In the group of older MSS, P<sup>6</sup> has the highest Hebrew support, 42.9%; F<sup>1</sup> the lowest, 33.4%. L<sup>5</sup> has the highest Targum support, 39.3%; F<sup>1</sup>, again, the lowest, 29.8%. L<sup>5</sup> also has the highest Greek support, 34.7%; F<sup>1</sup> again has the lowest, 24.0%. L<sup>5</sup> again has the highest Syrohexapla support, 34.3%; L<sup>4</sup> has the lowest, 24.3%. Of the combined support, P<sup>6</sup> is highest with all four texts, 21.9%; F<sup>1</sup> is lowest, with 14.4%; L<sup>5</sup> and

F<sup>1</sup> tie for the highest with Hebrew-Targum support for their variants, having 8.8%; B is lowest, with 6.6%. B, on the other hand, is highest with Greek-Syrohexapla support, having 8.8%; F<sup>1</sup> is also reversed, now the lowest, with 5.0%.

In the group of later MSS, J<sup>1</sup> has the highest Hebrew support, 51.3%; O<sup>2</sup>, the lowest, 14.8%. J<sup>1</sup> again has the highest Targum support, 47.4%; O<sup>2</sup> again has the lowest, 15.1%. L<sup>6</sup> has the highest Greek support, 33.4%; O<sup>2</sup> once more has the lowest, 16.3%. J<sup>1</sup> has the highest Syrohexapla support, 34.6%; R<sup>4</sup>, the lowest, 15.7%. Naturally J<sup>1</sup> has the highest support from all four texts together, 24.4%; and of course O<sup>2</sup> has the lowest, 5.5%. P<sup>5</sup> has the highest combined Hebrew and Targum support, 9.2%; O<sup>2</sup>, the lowest, 4.7%. L<sup>6</sup> has the highest Greek and Syrohexapla combined support in its first hand, with 12.7%; J<sup>1</sup> is reversed, having here the lowest, 2.6%, though it is highest with Syrohexapla agreement.

Among the Massora correction MSS, L<sup>8-m</sup> has the highest support of each text; of Hebrew support it has 26.8%; L<sup>7-m</sup> has the lowest, 12.2%; of Targum support, L<sup>8-m</sup> has 25.0%; R<sup>7-m</sup>, the lowest, 13.0%; of Greek support, L<sup>8-m</sup> has 26.8%; L<sup>7-m</sup>, the lowest again, with 6.1%; of Syrohexapla support, L<sup>8-m</sup> has, again, 28.6%, the top; L<sup>7-m</sup> is lowest again, with 12.2%. L<sup>8-m</sup> has to be the highest in support from all four texts, with 16.1%; L<sup>7-m</sup> is lowest, with 2.0%. On the other hand, L<sup>7-m</sup> is highest in Hebrew-Targum support, having 6.1%; R<sup>7-m</sup>, lowest, with 1.2%. But R<sup>7-m</sup> is highest with Greek-Syrohexapla, 11.8%; L<sup>11-m</sup>, lowest, with 4.4%.

Among the Lectionaries, L<sup>12-1</sup> has the highest percentage of support from all the texts. It has 28.8% with Hebrew, while S<sup>4-1</sup> is lowest, with 15.9%; it has 33.7% with Targum, while S<sup>4-1</sup> again is lowest, with 17.2%; it has 31.2% with Greek, while S<sup>4-1</sup> and S<sup>5-1</sup> are tied for the lowest position, with 20.9%; it has 32.5% with Syrohexapla, while S<sup>5-1</sup> has the lowest, 21.8%. Of the combined support, R<sup>6-1</sup> is highest with all four texts, having 17.6%; S<sup>4-1</sup> and S<sup>5-1</sup> tie for the lowest position, with 8.2%. R<sup>6-1</sup> is also highest with Hebrew-Targum,

having 5.5%; S<sup>5-1</sup> is lowest, with 2.8%. S<sup>1-1</sup> is highest in Greek-Syrohexapla support, having 8.9%; S<sup>3-1</sup> is lowest, with 4.5%.

The Canticles (Psalter and Biblical Odes) MSS are not brought into these comparisons, because the sections of Is which they involve are too small to be statistically significant. The same thing is true of the manuscript fragments.

It is also useful to compare the mean percentages of support by the four texts, as summarized in Table 3, Part II. In the group of 6 older MSS, the average support given to the variants by the Hebrew is 39.0%; by the Targum, 35.0%; by the Greek, 29.8%; and by the Syrohexapla, 29.5%. For the 23 later MSS the averages are: for Hebrew, 30.9%; for Targum, 29.1%; for Greek 26.4%; and for Syrohexapla, 26.6%. For the 9 Massora correction MSS, the average percentages are: for Hebrew, 16.8%; for Targum, 17.1%; for Greek, 18.0%; and for Syrohexapla, 21.8%. For the 7 Lectionaries, not including the fragmentary L<sup>13-1</sup> and L<sup>14-1</sup>, the average percentages are: for Hebrew, 21.2%; for Targum, 23.3%; for Greek, 24.7%; and for Syrohexapla, 26.6%. Comparing the combined support, the averages for the older MSS are: for all four texts, 18.4%; for Hebrew and Targum, 8.2%; for Greek and Syrohexapla, 6.3%. For the later MSS, they are: for all four, 15.0%; for Hebrew and Targum, 6.8%; for Greek and Syrohexapla, 7.2%. For the Massora MSS, the averages are: for all four, 8.3%; for Hebrew and Targum, 3.4%; for Greek and Syrohexapla, 6.0%. For the Lectionaries, the averages are: for all four, 11.5%; for Hebrew and Targum, 3.8%; for Greek and Syrohexapla, 7.2%. (The usual order has been changed and the later MSS are listed after the older instead of after the Massora MSS, in order to facilitate the comparison of the later with the older.)

This comparison reveals that the later MSS average a smaller percentage of each of the four texts agreeing with their variants than do the earlier MSS; there is evidently a greater proportion of scribal corruptions. These figures give a negative answer to the question whether the Greek-Syro-

hexapla influence would be found to increase in the later MSS; likewise they contradict (concerning Is) Barnes' sentences quoted above. But they confirm the impression received in working on the Mt. Sinai Lectionaries and the Massora MSS, that these contain greater influence from the Greek and the Syrohexapla than from the Hebrew and the Targum. It is not the Greek and Syrohexapla influences that increase in the Biblical MSS as time goes on, but simply scribal corruptions. This finding raises another question: How much likelihood is there of finding genuine ancient readings in manuscripts so heavily influenced by the Greek version and the Syrohexapla, even at the earliest stage, and especially among the Massora and the Lectionary MSS? This problem received attention in Part II, the evaluations; see also the final section of Part III.

If we had selected for presentation only the variants that had the support of *Targum alone* of the four basic texts, we would have had only 62 variants from Biblical MSS, of which 14 would have been usable under our self-imposed limitations of significant categories, and we would have had 33 from the patristic quotations, of which 26 would have been acceptable under our limitations (and did appear in the evaluations along with 7 having only early patristic support). This method would have produced a thinly-drawn "targumic profile" of Is such as the one exhibited by A. Vööbus in *Peschitta und Targumim des Pentateuchs*, in which he presented 99 Targum traces, as follows (the numbers in parentheses are those we would have accepted with our limitations on the categories considered significant):

|                      | Ex 15: 1-21 | Dt 32: 1-43 |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Biblical MSS         | 6 (1)       | 15 (6)      |
| Liturgical MSS       | 6 (4)       | 29 (11)     |
| Patristic quotations | 16 (15)     | 27 (22)     |
| Totals               | 28 (20)     | 71 (39)     |
| Grand total          | 99 (59)     |             |

Twelve per cent of his 99, however, consisted of nothing more than addition or omission of the *waw* conjunction, which is

completely non-significant, as has been emphasized by Goshen-Gottstein (see discussion in the article "Syriac Variants in Isaiah 26" to follow this three-part article in the next issue).

### *Corroborating Studies*

The findings of the present investigation are supported by those of studies made by Goshen-Gottstein, as shown in the following summaries and brief quotations:

Examination of the MSS "leads us to distinguish between those written before the tenth century approximately and those written after it," for in the 10th cent. occurred "the final fixation of the Syriac Biblical *Massorah*." The "fairly rigid standardization of the text by that time" was "characterized by the two authoritative *Massorah* manuscripts, B.M. Add. 12178 (Jacobite) [L<sup>9-m</sup>] and 12138 (Nestorian) [L<sup>8-m</sup>]." Studying the Psalms, he compared all the MSS before the 10th cent. with the printed texts and A (M<sup>1</sup>), and found that "they contain 135 readings not known either from A or the prints." But comparing "the apparatus built on all the early manuscripts with those manuscripts later than the tenth century," he found that "practically no additional variant of any 'value' can be elicited."<sup>8</sup>

In studying Eze, he states,

Taking all the early manuscripts together, we find that the Massora manuscripts J and N contain no reading which is not known from some earlier manuscript. In Po [O<sup>1</sup>] we find 47 and in Ush [O<sup>2</sup>] 29 cases of new *corruptions*, apart from those deviations from the prints in which these manuscripts agree with the earlier ones. But there is not a single reading not contained in earlier manuscripts which may be said to be noteworthy.<sup>9</sup>

His investigation of Eze confirmed the result of his pilot studies, that "there are no 'recensions' but rather manuscripts deviating more or less from a statistical mean." However,

none of the manuscripts can be said, on the whole, to be "superior" to any other, and the relation between those cases in which such a *hapax*-variant in a manuscript is a corruption and those in which it

<sup>8</sup> Goshen-Gottstein, *op. cit.*, p. 170.    <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

may be important is about the same for all the manuscripts. We may assume, therefore, that any additional early manuscript which could be found would furnish us with a certain number of new variants, of which a few could be expected to be of real importance.<sup>10</sup>

In answer to the possible objection that he had examined in detail "only relatively few late manuscripts" in the Biblical books he had investigated, he stated that "the earlier collations as well as the history of the Peshitta text until its final Massoretic fixation (as shown by J and N)" would indicate a great likelihood that "the outcome of a complete study of all the hundreds of manuscripts would yield similar results." It is, naturally, "possible that a very few early, important readings otherwise unknown have survived only in later manuscripts." But, as he had abundant reason to conclude, "the effort spent in eliciting these out of the mass of later material would never be justified by the meagre foreseeable outcome of such a study." Thus he considered himself amply justified in putting forward his "contention that the proposed *editio minor* would answer our needs."<sup>11</sup> "It should be borne in mind," he added in a footnote, "that most readings not known from the MSS written before the tenth century will probably become known through B [C<sup>1</sup>]."<sup>12</sup>

Concerning Diettrich's *Apparatus*, he appropriately protests, "If there were still need for evidence against an *editio major*, Diettrich's collection would provide it." Although he made "repeated efforts," he did not succeed in finding his "way through the wealth of useless material assembled by Diettrich," and he "could not attain the same degree of exactness in evaluating his material as in the other books." However, he considered it safe to judge that in Is "the use of the eighteen late manuscripts as opposed to A F D and N [L<sup>3</sup>] will hardly add more than 2 per cent to the 'valuable' material in the apparatus." Of these additional readings none is "of any real value."<sup>13</sup>

The overawing 3000 "variants" from Isaiah collected by Diettrich

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187, note 112.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 173-174.

yield no more than 13 cases in which the use of A would not suffice, only half of these being of any possible importance.<sup>14</sup>

Goshen-Gottstein's view of the early state of the text and the worth of the later MSS concurs with ours completely. "In the light of all the early Peshitta MSS together, the textual development of the Syriac O.T. turns out to be not dissimilar to that of the MT and other versions," he concluded. Namely, "the earliest manuscripts in existence generally show the same corruptions and exhibit on the whole the same text." The explanation of this may be "either on the assumption of *one* 'archetypal' translation, or else by some early unknown editorial activity before the fifth century," which should not "be confused with the final Massoretic standardization in the ninth to tenth century."<sup>15</sup>

"In order to evaluate the 'post-Massoretic' material more correctly," he referred to the "Law of Scribes," according to which "the same textual change may creep into the text again and again, mostly for purely linguistic reasons." One must realize that "not every corruption is a 'variant,'" and it is necessary "to evaluate the 'post-Massoretic' material as a whole in order to determine whether it is worth our while to expend our efforts on it." Naturally, it was "inevitable, that a few 'important' readings should escape the final standardization of the Massorettes." However, "under the circumstances we cannot but ask ourselves the 'practical' question, *i.e.* whether these readings would be of any 'value' for our edition of the text."<sup>16</sup>

He found that the material he had examined "indicated that it is imperative to base an edition on the manuscripts written prior to the final Massoretic standardization (of the tenth century)"; it was clear that "examining later MSS (apart from B) would hardly justify the effort."<sup>17</sup>

While Goshen-Gottstein's studies were carried out to determine whether a critical edition of the OT Peshitta

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 182-183.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

would need to be an "*editio major*" or could acceptably be an "*editio minor*," something vastly more practicable,<sup>18</sup> his comments also fit the problems involved in our present study and consistently support our findings.

### *NT Quotations of Isaiah*

The Syrian authors' quotations of Is are sometimes influenced by the wording of the verses in their NT Peshitta form. One would imagine, before investigating, that the codices of the Curetonian and Sinaitic Old Syriac Gospels would be fruitful sources of the OT *Vetus Syra* where they contain quotations from the OT.

However, the investigation of the NT quotations of Is demonstrated that the citations lean heavily on the Greek text of either the OT or the NT. The Greek OT supports the variant 2 times, or 2.6%, of the 85 total; the Greek NT supports it 33 times, or 38.8%; both together support it 37 times, or 43.5%. In 10 instances (11.8%) the situation is inconclusive, since synonyms are involved, and the Greek of OT and NT could be translated by either Syriac form, that of the Peshitta OT or that of the variant. In 3 cases (3.5%) there is no support of any kind for the variant, and it is probably merely a scribal error or caprice; at least none of the 3 has any significance.

It is interesting to note that no patristic quotation is found agreeing with the Curetonian or Sinaitic Old Syriac form of the wording unless the NT Peshitta also has that same wording.

In 4 variants (5.9% of the 85 total), the Peshitta OT form is without any support whatever, yet is attested in the majority or all of the MSS, and may well represent the Old Syriac text form, hiding in the Peshitta as do those of this kind mentioned in Part II.

### *Summary*

The investigation of the Syriac version of Is resulted in 3049 variants from the Is MSS, 290 variants from the Syrian

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 163-170, 187, 201.

Fathers' quotations of Is, and 85 variants involving the NT. Nearly half of the 3049 variants in the Biblical MSS are singular readings, but many of these are scribal errors or inconsequential.

Of the evaluations in Part II concerning whether a reading is Old Syriac or a Targum trace, or a scribal error, or may be either of these, or where the Old Syriac may lie hidden in the Peshitta, the following summary can be given (see Table 4, Part II): There were 101 variants discussed all together; 20 (19.9%) could be either Old Syriac text form or scribal error; 11 (10.9%) may be Old Syriac hiding in the Peshitta; 23 (22.8%) are most likely scribal errors; 47 (46.5%) are probably genuine traces of the older text form, and about half of these, 24 (23.8% of the 101 total) are really traces of the Targum. These 101 that were worth discussing are only 3.0% of the total number of 3339 variants presented—3049 in the MSS and 290 more from the patristic quotations. Of this 3.0%, nearly half (47 of the 101), or 1.4% of the 3339 total, can rather safely be designated as traces of the archaic text. Of course, some of the variants in other categories not selected as substantial enough to discuss may also be genuine traces of the oldest text type.

The study of the NT quotations of Is shows clearly that the Old Syriac Gospels, the codices of the Curetonian and the Sinaitic Syriac, are not good hunting-grounds for Old Syriac forms of the text of Is, since they lean heavily on the Greek text of either the OT or the NT. The Greek NT text supports the variant 33 times, or 38.8% of the 85 total, and both the Greek OT and NT texts support it 37 times, or 43.5%. Twice the Greek OT text supports the NT reading, and in 3 cases there is no support of any kind for it; in 10 (11.8%), because of the use of synonyms, no conclusion can be drawn. In 5, the Old Syriac Text forms may be hiding in the Peshitta OT.

### Conclusions

Where support for a variant can be found in the Targum, and in that alone, it is quite surely a genuine trace of the original stratum underlying the Syriac OT text. Of the 24 that were thus located, plus 23 others, those that had Targum underlying them were from patristic sources; of the other 23, 15, or 65.2%, were from the older MSS, 4 of these having the sole support of the Targum; 6 were supported by Ephraim, twice with the Targum, and 4 by Aphrahat, likewise twice with the Targum. Only 1 such was found in the Massora MSS (45: 16<sup>2</sup>), supported by Targum; only 1 in the later MSS (60: 5<sup>b</sup>), supported by Ephraim; only 4 in the Lectionaries (1: 3<sup>b</sup>, 1: 3<sup>d2</sup>, 6: 6<sup>2</sup>, and 10: 18<sup>a2</sup>), 2 supported by Targum and 2 by Ephraim and Jacob of Edessa; only 2 were found in the Canticles (Psalter and Biblical Odes) MSS (26: 15<sup>h2</sup> and 26: 19<sup>g1</sup>), both supported by Targum, the latter also by Greek and Syrohexapla, beyond those in these groups that were also found in the oldest group. Thus it is clear that only the oldest MSS, before the Massora period, are worth the time spent. Anything genuine that will be found in the later ones will almost invariably also be in those earlier ones. This independent conclusion is amply corroborated by the findings of Goshen-Gottstein which have been cited.

Ephraim, and secondly, Aphrahat, are the most helpful patristic sources, but even in their writings the Greek influence is heavy, and it is not safe to call their variants Old Syriac text forms unless the Targum alone supports them.

Vööbus often cites the experience of Madame Curie, as mentioned in an article of his concerning his *Vetus Syra* project:

In the fascinating biography of her mother, Eve Curie describes how the discoverer of radium year after year stood in her workroom analysing wagonloads of pitchblende until she gathered from the tons of brown mass a decigram of the priceless stuff.

The situation is no different for the textual student. . . .<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Arthur Vööbus, "Completion of the *Vetus Syra* Project," *BR*, VI (1962), 55-56.